

Academic Achievement and Classroom Environment of Government and Private Secondary School Students

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Abstract

Academic achievement of a student has direct bearing not only on his career but also on his personality and overall outlook. Success and failure in the life of an individual is generally measured by the academic achievement of an individual, if the career choice that one makes is in tune with his or her academic orientation. And academic achievement has certainly some correlation with classroom environment of a student and subsequent learning experiences that one undergoes. Our school system needs to address this issue with due sincerity as the schooling is the crucial formative phase of one's life that determines the quality of future career or life that one is presumably going to take up. Classroom environment is closely related to the quality of learning experiences and thus resulting in the proportionate scholarly output of the students.

This paper delineates the outcomes of a study that attempted to investigate the relationship of academic achievement with classroom environment of government and private school students of adolescent age group. The paper, with the help of the empirical study and corresponding factual details, argues that classroom environment has a positive correlation with academic achievement of students and the need of the time is to develop a wholesome system of school education, irrespective of whether Government or private school system in order to equip our future citizens with necessary skills and competence to compete with their global counterparts and excel in their respective fields of future endeavours.

Keywords: Academic Achievement; Classroom Environment; School Education; Secondary Education; Learning Experiences

Introduction

Academic achievement of an individual plays a very important role in shaping his or her career, persona and overall outlook. Success and failure in the life largely depend on the academic and career choices that one make. Academic achievement of a student has direct bearing not only on his career but also on his personality and overall outlook. The quantum of success and failure in the life of an individual is generally measured by the academic achievement of an individual, if the career choice that one makes is in tune with his or her academic orientation. And academic achievement has certainly some correlation with classroom environment of a student and subsequent learning experiences that one undergoes. Our school system needs to address this issue with due sincerity as the schooling is the crucial formative phase of one's life that determines the quality of future career or life that one is presumably going to take up. Classroom environment is closely related to the quality of learning experiences and thus resulting in the proportionate scholarly output of the students. It certainly has very significant impact on students' achievement in a sense that it lays foundation of one's future career in life and contributes to the development of his or her overall outlook. India has a wide range of schooling facility across states with large numbers of government and private

schools to cater to the people. However, a close examination of the quality of education being imparted in our schools presents not so satisfactory picture of our education system. In terms of quality of classroom environment generally it is seen that government and private schools differ significantly.

If we look around in our society, we find that people with high degree of academic achievement are confident in their actions and efforts that they make towards anything in life. In fact if we compare and contrast between people of various strata of society in terms of their educational attainments and academic achievements as well as their overall persona, we find people are living in parallel worlds. There are people full of confidence and enthusiasm on one hand, whereas there are other types of people lacking in confidence and self-esteem and lagging behind their counterparts. Though equally it is true that not all those who have done well in academics are doing well in their respective careers; similarly not all those who could not do well in academics are not able to do well in their career. Even in some cases, those who do not have significant academic achievement are doing extremely well in their careers and have earned name, fame and money. But in general, the percentage of those successful people who have done well in academics is high. In an educational set-up, an individual's self-

confidence is intrinsically related to his or her academic achievements and ultimately determines how he or she learns and behaves in the surroundings and in society at large.

The classroom environment has facilitating effects on students' academic achievements, instructional factors, social factors and organizational factors within classroom having maximum influence on quality and quantity of student-teacher actions and contributes to the development of overall outlook. A poor quality of classroom environment coupled with poor learning experiences of student leads towards many evils. Increasing evidences indicate that those students who are failures in basic school subjects as well as have misguided motivation and lack of academic involvement are generally the underachievers and dropouts. Their failure may be due to their not so good classroom environment leading to their unhealthy perceptions of the self and the world. Many students, for example, have difficulty in school, not because of low intelligence or poor eyesight, but because there are no positive environment of learning in the classroom and in the school overall.

Classroom environment and curricular transaction is a critical part of effective and successful instruction. Effective classroom environment, which initiates with well-organized and efficient lesson planning preparation clubbed with a suitable physical set-up as well, helps a teacher to teach and students to learn effectively. Students perform well in an optimistic classroom atmosphere and an environment in which they feel secure, safe, cared for and involved. From a student point of view, effective and successful classroom environment provides students with opportunities to socialize while learning interesting content. From a teacher point of view, effective classroom environment involves conducive teaching learning atmosphere and interesting instruction. To ensure a favourable classroom environment, it should be well equipped and facilitated. The classroom's overall environment provides students with effective instruction and promotes smooth teaching learning process. Various research studies on this issue have linked environments with students' aptitudes and the type of instruction in predicting learning outcomes. It has been argued that most of the variance in student performance was attributed to the aptitude of learners and learning environments, with only a minor part accounted for by other variables. The type of school system has also a very important role to determine the quality of learning experiences and classroom environment of students. In India most of the Govt. schools are poorly managed with very little attention being paid to its overall environment. On the other hand, private schools focus more on physical infrastructure and classroom environment. As a result the teaching learning process in government

school system has been found to be neglected in general. There may be some exceptions though.

The Present Study

As discussed in the previous section, the stage of secondary education is a very critical phase in the overall educational structure of an individual. This stage is very crucial in shaping the future course of action for an individual. This stage is a significant determinant of one's career choice and quality of higher and professional education. It is a stage where students choose their future course of action and start focusing on their academics that would connect them with their future career and related higher education. In India, secondary education has continuously been facing wastage and stagnation. The school environment and more specifically classroom environment has an important bearing on this. In the light of the above discussion it seemed imperative to study the relationship of classroom environment and academic achievement of secondary school students in Government and private school system.

Statement of the Problem

"Academic Achievement and Classroom Environment of Government and Private Secondary School Students"

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between classroom environment and academic achievement of government school and private school students. More specifically the objectives of the study were as the following:

1. To examine relationship between academic achievement and classroom environment of the government school students.
2. To identify relationship between academic achievement and classroom environment of the private school students.

Hypothesis of the Study

Following are the hypothesis of the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and classroom environment of the government school students.
2. There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and classroom environment of the private school students.

Methodology

The present study is a descriptive study and took up survey method to collect data. One government school and one private school were identified to conduct the study. 50 students from the identified government school and 50 students from the private school were identified as the

sample of the study. A Classroom Environment Scale designed by Abdur Rehman was used as the research tools to collect data. For academic achievement related data, students' marks achieved in their last year's annual examination were

considered. The data so collected were collated appropriately and subjected to suitable statistical analysis such as Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation and t-test to test the hypotheses and subsequent interpretation.

Analysis and Interpretation

The coefficient of correlation and t-test were applied for testing the hypothesis pertaining to academic achievement and classroom environment of government and private school students. The following **Table-1** presents the score of coefficient of correlation between academic achievement and classroom environment of government and private school students.

Table-1: Coefficient of Correlation between Self Concept and Classroom Environment of the Govt. & Private School Students

Variable	N	df	Coefficient of Correlation	level of Significance
Govt. School Students	50	48	.53	0.01
Private School Students	50	48	.80	.01

As evident from table-1, in the case of government school students, the value of relationship was .53 which was highly significant at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between academic achievement and classroom environment of the government school students was rejected. The direction of the correlation further indicated a strong positive correlation between the variables. For private school students, the value of relationship was .80 which was highly significant at 0.01 level of significance. As this calculated value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between academic achievement and classroom environment of the private school students was rejected. The direction of the correlation further indicated a strong positive correlation between the variables.

In general, we find that the classroom environment of the students of both private and government schools have a strong positive relation with the academic achievement of the students. Those with relatively better degree classroom environment experiences were found to have been excelling in terms of academic achievement as well. If the classroom environment is good, the focus of the student towards studies would certainly be good and eventually that will lead to their better academic performance and achievement in the examinations.

Educational Implications

The study provides insight into the most critical aspects of teaching learning processes and overall school environment of any educational system. The following educational implications could be outlined based on the findings of this study.

1. Teachers should make efforts to create the classroom environment as suitable and conducive as they can to provide better learning experiences to the students.
2. The overall strategy of making a meaningful classroom environment must include elements of belongingness and affiliation for students. If students feel affiliated to the stakeholders of the classroom including teacher and peers, they will be better involved in the classroom processes and will certainly have fruitful learning outcomes.
3. Teachers should take steps to explore the relative suitability of different instructional methodologies for raising the cognitive level of pupils after periodic evaluations.
4. Proper guidance and counselling sources may be provided for overcoming the educational problems faced by high as well as low self-concept pupils showing poor performance at school.
5. Teachers should give special attention to the low- achiever students by encouraging them to participate more in the teaching learning process.
6. Students having low achievement level or learning difficulties may be involved in such types of activities which are conducive to the development of a high level of academic achievement in various curricular areas.
7. The results obtained in the study validate that there is significant differences in the classroom environment of government secondary schools and private secondary school. The classroom environment of government secondary schools was found to be less encouraging. The proper implementation of curriculum, methods of evaluation, better school policy and improved human relations can ensure high

level of student self concept in government secondary schools. Thus institution with more numbers of low achiever students must take concrete steps in this direction. In these schools adequate provision of classroom facilities material equipment be made and quality instructions be imparted to enhance the achievement level of the students.

8. Classroom learning can be made specifically relevant by having real life experiences simulated in the classroom. Methods may be followed not only because it gives captures the interest of the students but because it gives much of the responsibility for learning to the students.

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